

Weekly e-UU Newsletter – Friday, March 7, 2025

We acknowledge that our campus is located on traditional, unsundered and unceded Algonquin Anishinaabeg Territory; and that the work of reconciliation is a responsibility of our congregation, and of all Canadians.

Sunday, March 9, 2025

Online and In Person

Starts at 10:30am



Songs of Resistance and Resilience

With Guest Speaker and Musician Waigwa

Our guest speaker this Sunday is Waigwa, the artistic director of Minnesota's One Voice LGBTQIA choir. During our service, they will introduce the congregation to songs of protest and justice, teaching us the music and giving us their social, political, and cultural context.

If you know, or suspect, that you have COVID or another respiratory illness, [please take part in the service online.](#)

Sunday Service Announcements

If you would like an announcement made during the livestreamed Sunday Service, please email the Board of Directors at boardannouncements@firstunitarianottawa.ca by Friday at 10am. Do allow for time in case there are questions with regard to the announcement. Also note that announcements may need to be edited for length and that time-sensitive announcements may be prioritized.



Children's Religious Exploration

We're taking a **March Break** from OWL and our usual 2-12 curriculum. Instead, after Time for All Ages, all our UU Kids will head to Room 4 for social time and free creative play.

Ministerial Search Focus Groups

Given Reverend Eric's unexpected June departure, our search for a replacement is on a short time frame. Much of the survey and focus group input we got in 2020 on congregants' priorities is still relevant – but we want to supplement it now. We particularly encourage people to participate who did not do so last time.



The following focus groups still have space available:

- **For newer congregants** - Tuesday, March 11 - 7:00pm - on Zoom - ("Newer Congregants" refers to those who have been attending FirstU for five years or fewer)
- **Open to all congregants** - Saturday March 15 - 10:00am - Room 3
- **Open to all congregants** - Monday March 17 - 7:00pm - on Zoom

Register for the focus group that suits you best by emailing: focusgroup@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Please Note:

The focus group for RE Parents, originally scheduled for March 9, has been cancelled due to low registration AND

Registration for the Longtime Congregants focus group, scheduled for the morning of March 13, is closed as all spots have been filled.

Splinters from the Board

After a hiatus, we are going to start again offering a brief summation of key points from the most recent board meeting. Here is a summary of the board's February 19 meeting:



- Welcomed 2 new members: Alexis McKenzie and Ken Denison
- Confirmed that Brent Nicolle would serve as chair of the 2026 pledge campaign
- Reviewed 2024 year-end financial statements and investment reports, both of which were positive
- Decided to pursue a contract-to-call search for a new minister
- Appointed a search committee
- Decided on ways to keep members of the congregation informed regarding the search and to solicit input from them
- Received reports regarding the Ajashki Program and campus development progress

Don't forget! This Saturday, March 8, the clocks Spring Forward by an hour over night. Church will feel extra early this Sunday, but we'll see you there!

Caring Contacts for March

[Clea Derwent](#) - 613-694-0505

[Karen Swinburne](#) - 613-234-4305

We are all interconnected, interdependent and minister to each other in many ways. Our monthly Caring Contacts take your phone calls and emails when you wish to alert us to a need or a concern or have a joy to celebrate. We try to ensure no one is forgotten and that appropriate help is provided when requested.

Featured Volunteer Opportunity

Help Congregant Mobility!

Elevator operators are necessary to assist our fellow congregants with mobility issues in using the elevator to access congregation functions. We are seeking two more volunteers to act as Operators for Sunday services and on special occasions such as Christmas services, concerts, Fall Fair, etc. This would involve helping one Sunday per month.

Sunday Service schedules are arranged on a monthly basis, so no commitment to an on-going specific Sunday is required. Training for operating of the elevator is provided and takes about 15 minutes.

For further information, visit our [Volunteer With Us](#) page, [contact Stan by email](#) or call/text him at 613-614-3750.

Want to let the congregation know about a volunteer opportunity? [Fill out this online form](#) to let people know!

Have you already completed the FirstU Volunteering survey? If not, please click the embedded link and add your information to the volunteering data base: [Participation Survey](#)

-Chuck Shields, Volunteer Coordinator - volunteers@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Read All About It



The Time & Talent Auction is Back

After a several-year pause for global "events" the T&T Auction returns. This is an activity designed to build community while raising funds for our precious FirstU. Popular items in auctions-past have included at-home dinners, cottage visits, games nights, local tours and bike tune-ups. Also specially-baked treats, custom pottery, and more. **What can you offer? What will you bid for?** With a late-April auction date approaching, it's time to get creative. **Offers or questions can be sent to [T&T coordinator David Chernushenko](#).**



Campus Community Wellbeing Committee (CCWC)

[Here is your link to the CCWC's first annual report](#), which summarizes the committee's activities since its inception in 2023. Representatives of the Cleary campus partners (currently, First Unitarian, Unitarian House, River Parkway Children's Centre, Or Hanesamah, and Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services) worked together to communicate and address matters of common concern and interest. In the foreseeable future, as campus plans progress through the site planning stages to construction and beyond, the CCWC will continue to identify and communicate issues impacting the well-being of campus visitors and residents.

Upcoming Events

Ministerial Search Focus Groups – March 11-17

The Ministerial Search Committee wants to hear from you at one of our Focus Groups! Register by email, at focusgroup@firstunitarianottawa.ca, for the session that suits you best:

- Tuesday, March 11 - 7:00pm - **on Zoom** - For **newer congregants** (attending FirstU for five years or fewer)
- Saturday March 15 - 10:00am - **Room 3** - **Open to anyone**
- Monday March 17 - 7:00pm - **on Zoom** - **Open to anyone**



Unitarian Go-Gos Baking and Jewelry Sale - Sunday, March 16 - 11:30am - Fellowship Hall

The Unitarian GoGos will be holding a bake sale and jewelry sale to support the Stephen Lewis Foundation during these exceptional times. Bring cash and support people impacted by the withdrawal of USAID funding in sub-Saharan Africa, while picking up tasty treats and beautiful goodies for you and your friends!



Save the Date

The Mess We're In (political study group) - Thursday, March 20 - 6:30pm - Room 3

The political study group, entitled "The Mess We Are In" just wrapped up Listen Liberal by Thomas Frank and will start a new book: [Breaking Free of Neoliberalism: Canada's Challenge](#), by Alex Himelfarb (2024). Meetings last about 90 minutes. [Contact Marc Brunet](#) if you would like to join or want more information.



Women's Inclusive Pagan Circle Ostara Ritual - Thursday, March 20 - 7:00pm - NOW Room - \$5 Suggested

Trans women, cis women, and non-binary folks are invited to take part in our Ostara Ritual. Honour the sacred balance of Spring Equinox and celebrate the spring of sap rising and geese returning. Bring finger foods to share after the ritual and anything seasonal you'd like to include on our altar.



Introducing Ourselves - Sunday, April 13 - 12:00pm - Fellowship Hall

This will be a small group, casual gathering after Sunday Service. You will share with other newcomers what brought you to FirstU, hear and ask about the basics of Unitarian Universalism and get some insight into how FirstU functions and ways you can get connected here. Brent Nicolle and Rev. Eric Meter will be your guides. This session will be offered in-person at FirstU, unless there is a general preference to meet on Zoom instead. For more information and to register, email_welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca.



Visit our calendar for more upcoming events: <https://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/calendar.html>

Recurring Events

Virtual Bridge (Monthly) - Friday, March 7 - 7:00pm on Zoom and Bridge Base

Join us online for a fun game of bridge, using Zoom and Bridge Base Online, on the first Friday of every month. [Email Barb R](mailto:Barb.R) to RSVP and get the links and ensure your spot, by the Thursday immediately before our game.



After-Service Conversation (Biweekly) - Sunday, March 9 - 11:45am - The Lounge

Join us in the Lounge for a conversation about themes and insights from this morning's service. Grab some food from Fellowship Hall then join us in the Lounge for coffee and the conversation.



Taoist Tai Chi (Weekly) - Tuesdays at 1:00pm - Fellowship Hall

Tai Chi is a series of gentle movements that improves circulation, strengthens the bones, and develops good balance. Instructed by the "Friends of Tai Chi". By donation. Questions? adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca.



Knitters Group (Weekly) - Wednesdays at 1:00pm - Room 3

This group welcomes knitters and crocheters of any level, from beginner to expert, who enjoy creating hand-made items in a friendly, supportive setting. Using donated yarn, we make a variety of goods to sell at Fall Fair, Mitten Tree, and other events in support of the church, and to donate to special community projects.



Online Group Meditation (Weekly) - Wednesdays at 7:00pm - On Zoom

Join us on Wednesday evenings for online meditation plus readings from teachers like Thich Nhat Hanh. [Let Colleen know](#) if you would like to receive a friendly email reminder on Tuesday.



FirstU Virtual Discussion Circle (Biweekly) - Thursday, March 13 - 1:30pm - On Zoom

Discussion circles are held biweekly, with a different topic each time. No pre-registration is required, just drop in by clicking on the link. We look forward to seeing you! This week, our topic is "**Uncomfortable Truths**".



Men's Breakfast Group (Biweekly) - Friday, March 14 - 8:00am - Fellowship Hall - \$10

Gentlemen are invited to join the Men's Breakfast Group for coffee, socializing, and breakfast, followed by an informative and engaging talk by [Peter Duschinsky](#) who will present his topic, *Hearts of Freedom – Stories of Southeast Asian Refugees*. Expect a lively discussion to ensue. **Register, no later than Monday, March 10, by [submitting this form](#).**



Mental Health Support and Action Group (Monthly) - Sunday, March 16 - 12:00pm - Room 6 and [Online](#)

The Mental Health Support and Action Group meets on the third Sunday of every month for an hour of supportive listening and sharing. An additional thirty minutes are available after 1:00pm for those who wish to collaborate on group administration and on planning the future foci of our group.



In-Person Bridge (Monthly) - Sunday, March 16 - 2:00pm - Room 3

Join us in Room 3, on the third Sunday of the month, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm, for a fun game of bridge. To RSVP, [email bridgehost@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:bridgehost@firstunitarianottawa.ca) by the Saturday immediately before our game, so we can set up before you arrive!



FirstU Trivia Night (Monthly) - Monday, March 17 - 7:00pm - On Zoom

Join us for our monthly Trivia Quiz! Questions are diverse, fun, and taken from several sources, and there is no need to feel embarrassed about getting an incorrect answer: players score themselves! All you need is a pen or pencil, paper and your "thinking cap". Play alone or team up with friends!



yUuth Group (Monthly) - Friday, March 21 - 6:30pm

Youth ages 11-17 are invited to join our yUuth Group meetup on the third Friday of every month. We usually meet at the church (but sometimes go bowling or do something else off-site), share a meal, and play games together. Email dre@firstunitarianottawa.ca for details on this month's activity!



Thursday Evening Reading for Growth (Monthly) - Thursday, March 27 - 7:00pm - On Zoom

Join us, on the fourth Thursday of every month, for a lively discussion of our next book! [Contact Ken for the zoom link and our next title!](#)



Daytime Reading for Growth (Monthly) - Friday, March 28 - 1:30pm - On Zoom

Please join the discussion of *Laughing with the Trickster: On Sex, Death and Accordions*. Indigenous playwright, novelist, and musician, Tomson Highway compares Christian, Classical, and Cree mythologies central to Western culture. The book is available at Ottawa libraries or enjoyed on [CBC Massey](#) lecture series. [Contact Clea](#) for the zoom details [Contact Clea](#) for the zoom details.



Algonquin Word of the Week

We all know that Ajashki means "Soil" in Algonquin, that Kitigan Zibi means "Garden River", and "Gichi Miigwetch" means "Thank you very much". Let's learn some more words in Algonquin language. **This week's Algonquin Word of the Week is:**



Ziinzibaakwadwaatig

Ziinzibaakwadwaatig means "sugar wood" and refers to what, in English, are called Sugar Maples. "Maajigaa" means "it starts to drip" (sap run): Because of the longer day-lengths and the freeze-thaw-freeze weather we have right now, the maple trees – and all trees – are waking up and letting their sap flow.

Unitarian Universalist nUUs



CanUUdle XXV: AdventUures on the High Seas - May 16-19 – Chez the Unitarian Church of Montréal

Can you believe this is our twenty-fifth CanUUdle? It's true! Registration for our annual national yUuth and YA conference **is now OPEN!** We require a minimum of 30 participants registered by April 15 for the program to go ahead. [Click HERE for full details and registration!](#)



Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth - SAVE THE DATE: Earth Day Worship Celebration

Tuesday, April 22 - 8:00pm - Online

As Unitarian Universalists, we are positioned to be faith leaders at this critical time in our country's history. Where do we start? This Earth Day, UU Ministry for Earth will help us deepen practices that put Love at the center of our climate justice work. [Register for the online service HERE.](#)

Chez FirstU

Rise: A Community Singing Event – This Sunday, March 9 - 1:30pm - Admission is By Donation

Tone Cluster and All Voices queer choirs will lead the audience in singing songs of protest and justice, as well as perform some choral numbers. *Joining us for this event will be Waigwa, the Artistic Director of Minnesota's One Voice Chorus, who will also be the guest speaker for FirstU's March 9 Sunday Service.* **Advance tickets recommended.** Available at: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-CA/ticketing/rise-a-community-singing-event>



Get the eUU in your inbox: <https://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/connect-with-us.html#nUUs>